

Dornsife College Faculty Council
Meeting Agenda for Oct. 2, 2019
2:30-4:30 pm, Irani Hall (RRI) 321

Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting

Date: October 2, 2019

Room: Irani Hall, Room 321

Present (16): Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch, David Crombecque, Melissa Daniels-Rauterkus, Gerald “Jerry” Davison, Shannon Gibson, David Ginsburg, Bob Girandola, Devin Griffiths (*president*), Yuka Kumagai, Jessica Parr, Andrea Parra, Michael Petitti, Gioia Polidori (*vice president*), Alisa Sánchez, An-Min Wu (*secretary*), Emily Zeamer.

Absent (3): Antonio Elefano, Sri Narayan, Joe Palacios.

Guests (4): Amber Miller (Dean of USC Dornsife)
Kimberly Freeman (Associate Dean, Chief Diversity Officer)
Renee Perez (Senior Associate Dean and Chief Operating Officer)
Kirby Farah (Lecturer, Anthropology)

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting (5-08-19)

- 15 of the DFC present vote to approve them, zero oppose, and zero abstain

Updates (2:35-45)

- Devin quickly gave updates on Senate Resolution and ongoing discussions with Deans before Dean’s arrival:
 1. Drafted a Senate Resolution to ask for a releasing of findings regarding Puliafito and will take it to Senate Executive Board for the motion
 2. Both Devin and Gioia attended All chairs’ meetings; Devin talked about what DFC does and how we will work with chairs in the future.
 3. Brought the linkage of university budget to the Dornsife salary and merit pool issue to Dean Miller and Dean Stott. Devin’s analysis showed the Dornsife college systematically pays more porportionally than other schools. But Dean Miller said that time needed for building the relationships with the new university administration. So Devin wanted to bring to DFC to discuss about the game plan:

Devin expressed that conceding of the salary agenda is not good as there is a clear problem there. Instead of directly advocate to Provost, we can make recommendations and get chairs to sign-on our proposal (e.g. consider to take out retirement and hiring from the salary pool) This way we respect Dean Miller’s point but continue to push the agenda forward. **Gioia** agreed and suggested to

separate the promotion and merit pool. **Jessica** thought that the increase of merit pool should be included in the proposal as well as to make the merit review results useful, so people are motivated to do better. **Devin**: Dean is open to discuss the salary floor. The plan is to have the Salary and Merit Task Force to work with TJ McCarthy in Price School to build a Dornsife salary report to tackle this and compression issue.

Emily: Given the importance, shouldn't we address the compression issue first? Salary can be a mechanism from the solution for compression. **Gioia** reported that she mentioned to Dean Mille and Dean Stott the inversion issue raised during the Sept. DFC meeting and Dean Miller said that at the moment there are no salary inversions in Dornsife.

Devin: We can make recommendations on ways for Dean Miller and Dean Stott to focus on specific departments. **Melissa** asked about the timeline to get the salary and merit pool issues resolved. **Devin** suggested the proposal to tie to all chairs' meetings, and therefore we should target either late fall or early spring. But DFC needs to start getting that into scheme, and get much work done this semester prior to giving recommendation.

Jessica thought the nuance of politics is understandable, but the issue is pressing. For example, there is inherent inequality in the revised merit guideline – the request on a spread (of merit scores) still exists and that affect a lot of people. **Devin**: We can ask Deans to look at equity and add to those underserved, to handle salary compression and differentiate merit pays. **Gioia** stressed that postponing the budget workshop doesn't mean that we do not do anything; we should still keep working on this. Yet, we would be choosing to work with the administration, not against. Since Dean Miller is the one who is meant to advocate for Dornsife with the President and Provost, we can give her the chance to do it and then follow up. **Jerry** thought the strategy suggested by Devin to hold back is the right approach to move forward; internally we can continue to work on what we want. **Marianna** echoed with what Jerry said and added that the merit criteria is not present nor implemented in an objective way in some departments. If we will tie salary increase on merit evaluation, advocacy for a clear process in merit review is needed.

4. Chair of the Economics Department asked for the extension of tenure track process to 7 years – **Devin**: do we want to take this over dornsife? Or if we charge it to TT caucus? There was no clear responses from Council members on the interest to take on this task.
5. Sasha Erwin (a student reporter, doing a project on DEI hiring in TT) contacted Devin and is interested to know whether Dornsife has been going after the 50-million dollar DEI fund from the Provost office and how it has been used.

- **Marianna** said that the new Dornsife faculty (promotion) guideline is more vague and more demanding. **Devin:** RTPC should take on this. **Gioia:** will email with Stott with a workshop for the new guideline. **Andrea** said she has scheduled John Holland to come to her department (Latin American and Iberian Cultures) to talk about the new guideline as there is a need for addressing some specific questions. **Gioia** said that last year there was a schoolwide workshop and one for natural sciences and one for humanities. If we have not done one for Social Sciences, we can organize one for social sciences first. Dean Stott lead the workshop himself, possibly with John or not.
- **David C** asked what changes will be from the Dornsife Undergraduate Signature Experience project and how those will affect faculty? **Jessica/Gioia/Emily** were in the workshop last week. The Council members then described the proposal to run GE courses in pairs and limit enrollment to students who take both courses. **Emily** thinks this interdisciplinary collaboration would be good and useful for merit review. Anthropology has started the conversation and course development on this initiative; what we need is working groups or other gestures that encourage faculty to converse. **Gioia** suggested maybe to organize peer mentoring groups or reading groups, and provided the example of Human Biological Science's peer mentoring group for teaching. **Jessica** agreed that reading groups can be beneficial.

Devin will invite Dean Stott back to DFC to present the project updates. Several current discussion/activities include 1) Clarify Dornsife identity 2) First Dornsife Major and Minor Fair in a decade (Oct. 7, 2019) 3) Effective advising and curriculum reform 4) Instead of getting rid of admitted majors (undeclared), possibly meta majors. **Jessica** said getting rid of majors will lose the enrichment and cohort experience (e.g. build pre-med vs. non-pre-med cohorts) and would like to see options for students to apply for specific majors. **Devin:** DFC should ask more details on the admission and advising structure when Dean Stott comes back to present.

Discussion with Dean Miller and team (3:00-4:00)

At 3pm Dean Miller and Kimberly Freeman arrived.

- **Overall discussion of Deans's priorities for the coming Year**

Dean Miller described the past years' accomplishments in Dornsife first – Setting the big picture and strategic planning for institutes and departments, and academic intellectual goals. Last year, the college focused on making significant implementation on research related goals as well as on DEI. This year, the college assesses the influences from the central administration, but from the on research/education perspectives, this fall's rollout is clear. For example, the PhD Academy is fully launched this fall. The current goals are 1) to learn how we make this culture welcoming and happier for individuals working in departments,

2) to continue working with departments on their own goals and toward the implementations of Dornsife's wider themes, and 3) to provide seed grants for big ideas – hope to fund 2-3 significant centers, 4) to raise (since last year) for endowed faculty chairs, for intellectual focused programs.

The two initiatives on the college level now are a) Science in the Public Square – invite faculty to join and serve as subject matter experts to local governments and private sectors (Kate Weber in Dean's office as the contact) b) Sustainability – look for ways to put individual divisions together. Dean Miller mentioned the interest of this topic from President Folt with the Task Force putting into place on the central admin now. The Dornsife Deans of Natural Sciences and of Social Sciences are both on the president's task force. Then, **Dean Miller** continued to recite her current understanding about the new central administration. President Carol Folt has high expectation on culture and her high priority appears to be a) Student access (to funding etc.) and b) sustainability. As to the new provost (Chip), Miller does not know much about him yet; Dean Stott worked with him in the previous university and speaks highly of him.

- **Progress on DEI hiring and retention at Dornsife**

Devin: Two things we'd like to talk about here. First, What's the state right now in terms of DEI hiring, promoting and retaining on TT faculty; specifically, how this relates to the DEI hiring fund \$50M

(<https://faculty.usc.edu/mentoring/castingwidenet/>)?

Dean Miller: Dornsife uses the fund as much as we can. This mainly to help housing, start-up package, spousal hiring. **Renee:** Every time we had a DEI hiring we asked for DEI fund. Last year, there were 8 successful cases in the DEI hiring fund, ranged from \$75k to \$200k (usually about \$75k-100k on housing support).

Miller: The fund helped to make attractive offers even the numbers were not as big as they sound.

Devin: The second question is, what is philosophy on faculty DEI hiring for different ranks? Is there a priority as to ranks?

Miller: Generally, current (DEI) hiring is largely junior, but not exclusively. When senior-level faculty departs, we try to open that senior position up. If someone comes up as DEI hiring and is not junior, and we have resources to do it, we will do it. There is no rigidity here. **Renee:** The competition space is tight. We're doing what we can but sometimes we still don't win. **Miller:** but we landed a lot of successful hiring on DEI candidates.

Devin: What counts as DEI hiring? **Kimberly:** In 2018, we came up a report that provides who is considered underrepresented – Dornsife tries to cover as most categories; then every school adjusts their definitions.

Devin last asked about how we can increase the diversity in RTPC and other positions besides TT? **Miller** answered by starting on how she sees the development of the bylaw is needed in each department, which was expressed in

yesterday's All Chairs meeting. Milles thinks RTPC is often *ad hoc* hiring and we need a better guidelines (bylaws) on how to grapple this.

- **Relation of Teaching Postdocs to faculty positions**

Devin: What is the defined role of Teaching Postdocs compared with other positions? There is some anxiety that teaching postdocs may replace teaching faculty positions.

Miller: The ecosystems are different in each department. I want to know what each department thinks. Last year, I was told by the two divisional deans that this is for the professional training purpose. This needs to be driven by intellectual ecosystems. We'll need to talk in specific cases. **Renee:** This is not paid by Provost; there used to be a program, but not anymore.

- **Discussion of new merit recommendations and mentoring guidelines for all tracks.**

Devin: We will continue looking at merit pool. But how does merit review connect to the merit pool? One task for DFC now is to make recommendations on how merit is structured and how review feeds back to mentoring and improvement, across both TT and RTPC. The promotion guideline is clear, but merit review guideline is not. **Miller** agreed that these are terrific things to look at. One thing started is the overview of the developmental review (3 pages) for TT on 3rd, 4th, and 5th years. Soon to distribute the document on the process, from arrival to tenure, to help TT to find everything in one place. Will run over DFC and chairs before release. As to the merit review for both TT and RTPC, the processes should be equally clear. **Miller** said we will review the process, but not the criteria – which should be reviewed by the mentor in your field.

Devin: How do we have a meaningful merit evaluation, and how to link that to salary? **Miller:** Difficult; the current range of merit scores is pretty narrow (~ 3.5-4.5). This needs to be discussed at the department level. **Devin:** The merit review should include improvement that ties to the mentoring system. **Renee:** Not sure how much Dornsife can include here as the number system is pretty set in stone from the central (Provost). **Shannon:** We need constructive feedback on the evaluation. **Jessica:** In the Chemistry Department, there are two sets of criteria for TT and RTPC, and the review are run separately. While departments are different, some guidelines would help people to think about more. **Devin:** DFC will spend some time on that. **Renee:** Treat what given by Provost's office as rules. **Miller:** Since we have the first Provost from outside USC for a long time, we should also be expected to see changes.

- Update on Salary and Merit Pool

Devin: We want to make sure to get the contact point person in Dean's office to work with us and TJ McCarthy on salary benchmarking. Devin will reach out to

Renee and send the report TJ conducted. **Miller:** This has been harder than we thought. We attempted to do it last years but were told that we cannot ask for a lot of things e.g. ranks in CSU. **Devin:** Even benchmark few departments will help. Gioia emailed Dean Miller, Dean Stott and Renee Perez the white paper produced by the RTPC committee of the Academic Senate together with the salary schemes for teaching, research and TT faculty at the UC system.

Devin: The Dean's office is developing a list of resources for faculty, and we'd like to include that in DFC's website with the guidance from the Advocacy and Oversight caucus. **Miller:** will send to Devin (for DFC) and all chairs to review before sending this living document to all faculty.

Devin asked for a course release for future DFC Presidents. Dean Miller said it is ok: just coordinate with Renee Perez. Devin to send an email to Renee on this. Last, we want to express our excitement about the faculty governance – where DFC works with Dean's office and University Senate also works more with the central.

- Q & A with Dean Miller:

Marianna: There are constant issues on the business office system Concur. There is a lot of confusion. **Miller:** We welcome user experience feedback on this and will forward the feedback and talk to the person in charge in Central. **Renee:** Concur is a good system, but what happened on the configuration for USC is the attempt to build something to look like the old one. With the hard deadline to roll out the system, there is also lack of user training. There are some adjustments now but still working progress. Desktop works but mobile is still missing functions. Renee can arrange some training if that helps.

Melissa: Very happy to learn for the centralized locations for the departmental review. What's the timeline to roll out this? **Miller:** Will ask Dornsife Faculty Affairs committee on this, but expect this to be done before the end of semester. **Renee:** Faculty affairs website has some resources. But if you have questions, for now you can reach out via email.

Alisa: Can we get a birds' eye view on the DEI liaison across departments, some information/guideline about the process, role, responsibility, and details on how each department approaches this? **Kimberly:** The DEI liaison is basically identified by the department and shared with me to approve. **Renee:** There is currently no specific document to define DEI search. **Miller:** We should write out something for the search process. Basically, the search committee is proposed by the chair of the search committee – Kimberly to approve the DEI liaison and the divisional dean to approve the overall search committee. When the entire search committee is approved, it should not be a secret, yet whether the department shares who the liaison on the committee is not clear.

Next steps (3:30-4:30)

- On caucuses level, **Devin** suggested each caucus to
 - Start by reviewing the previous year's final report. Goals and recommendations to Dean's office can be found from the reports.
 - Set goals – about what is considered a success and what is the realistic outcomes we can get. This helps next year's caucus to understand what's measured as the success.
 - Set rule of attendance.
 - **Devin** will send the lists to caucus chairs.
- **Gioia** mentioned that Antonio Idini wrote a 2-3 page email on the guideline of chartering a committee.
- **Devin** will be forwarding past DFC documents to An-Min (and to future Secretary).
- Dean's faculty forum on Jessica, Gioia and An-Min will attend.

- As to DFC budget, in theory there is \$10k per year available. Typically this is used for events we organize, yearly dinner, and snacks during the regular meetings. **Emily** asked if we can create budget for faculty meeting grants for a small amount of money (e.g. \$750); **Devin** suggested to give the undergraduate's writer's conference \$500; **Jessica** mentioned that Dornsife doesn't offer awards for faculty on teaching, services or mentoring etc., and maybe we can create the award and use some funds for making the plaques. We can ask Dean's support. Maybe service or teaching awards, category (RTPC/TT) or not. Gioia proposed to invest some of the funding into developing mentoring initiatives. **Devin** will add the budget into next meeting's agenda for further discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.

Respectfully,
An-Min